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ABSTRACT

An account of the sessions of the twenty-seventh annual School Vision Forum and Reading Conference is included in this issue. Contents consist of the reports of the following sessions: A School Program Focused on Learning Rather Than Teaching; What Psychologists Can Contribute to Educators and Optometrists; Perceptual Clairvoyance; Empowering the Mind through Reading; Making Children's Literature Work; Promoting Child Success: A Discussion; and Right to Read and Parental Involvement. Four additional articles explore the following topics: urging creative writing for children, sex stereotyping in the classroom, leveled study guides, and encouraging independent reading with young children. Remarks by Nila Banton Smith at the ground-breaking ceremony of the new International Reading Association headquarters building and an editorial sketch, "Who Is Too Old to Learn Is Too Old to Teach," conclude the issue. (JM)

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The Twenty-seventh Annual School Vision Forum and Reading Conference

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The President Communicates

Herbert H. Sandberg*

What is more vital to a working organization than the willingness of individuals to share in the decision making process? In Ohio, so many people have contributed their talents, abilities, and time to OCIRA, that it is not possible to name them all. However, I would like to extend special appreciation to individuals who have recently completed outstanding service, and without whom, our state council would not be one of the outstanding in the country.

Kathryn Luebkeman and Doris Ramsey have recently retired from their positions as field representatives. Our number of local councils has grown significantly over the years because of the dedicated work of our field representatives. Both Kathryn and Doris have promised continued love for and loyalty to the Ohio Council.

Pearl Parsley and Marion Barbey have just finished their service to the conference commission. Because of their efforts, we have seen many successful, inspirational, and informative fall conferences.

The miniconferences have been extremely successful and well received. Such conferences don't just happen. Madeline Pope and Mike Wirick planned a most successful conference at Kent State which 900 people attended. Wow!

Nancy Dunne, Agnes Harper, and Jane Shula chaired the planning of the Ashtabula miniconference which ended with a books and materials auction which was a delight to everyone.

Marilyn Jende and Rita Klosterman were co-chairpersons of the Dayton miniconference which provided an opportunity for people to participate in a wide variety of informative workshops.

We look forward to the spring miniconference in Lima at the Ohio State University Branch on April 20, which is headed up by Lois Snyder, Del Chalus, and Eleanor Pikal.

Local council presidents will miss the valuable services of Madeline Pope, council activities coordinator, who provided yeoman service in distributing information about local council programs.

And of course, we all deeply appreciate the sincere dedication of Phyllis Sleasman who has served the Ohio Counil as executive secretary-treasurer for so many years. At this writing, Phyllis is undergoing major surgery. Our prayers and good wishes are with you, Phyllis, for a rapid recovery. We love you.

Amarayllis Russell, who has assisted Phyllis and provided her with invaluable help, will serve as acting secretary-treasurer throughout the summer while Phyllis is recovering.

The work of these and countless others certainly insures bright promise for children and youth in Ohio as they find in reading a real source of personal pleasure and satisfaction. I invite you to write Ruth Gooding, 4677 Brooksdale, Mentor, 44060, to become actively involved in OCIRA next year.

*President, Ohio Council of the International Reading Association

Twenty-seventh Annual

SCHOOL VISION FORUM

and

READING CONFERENCE

Someone once said that it is not enough to make progress, we must make it in the right direction. The progress that the Annual School Vision Forum and Reading Conference has made in the past twenty-six years has been amply demonstrated. Good progress depends very largely on the enterprise and interest of deep-thinking leaders such as Dr. Lois Bing and others, who are ahead of the times in their ideas. The following pages, which report the twenty-seventh annual conference, speak eloquently of the progress and of the leaders who have refused to believe that what they know to be right cannot be done properly.

A School Program Focused On LEARNING Rather Than Teaching

John Streff, Speaker*
Betty Hubbard, Reporter**

Much of the time, the curriculum, the room configuration, and the length of the day are determined by "some higher authorities, custodians and buses." Thus, a teacher's responsibility would be to work within this framework and still adhere to the child's needs.

The goal each teacher should strive for is to "Promote Child's Success." As the common denominator in education is the child, then without children, there is nothing to focalize upon. Therefore, the key seems to be to create opportunities and desires in children that promote learning. This will result in a more positive self-concept through self-change.

In Dr. Streff's study conducted in the Cheshire, Connecticut schools, he was trying to establish a way of teaching that would lower the number of myopic children and encourage success. The children were placed in classes by their maturational level. (Their theme was: "Slow Kids Down.") Grade levels were based on half year steps. As children develop, learning seems to be in half year intervals until they are about seven years old. Thus, a readiness program which was called "Pre-

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Kindergarten" was initiated. Two separate kindergartens encompassing all four and a half year olds and five year olds was the next step. After these initial readiness

Each child is an individual and each child has something to contribute.

programs, the children were admitted to the first grade. By the time the children reached second grade, they had gained a half year in maturation and the group's overall scores remained more homogenous than before the program was initiated. In an average school setting, one-third of the children would have experienced some kind of failure—be it socio-emotional, educational failures, or physical failure—which would possibly result in negative feelings about school, home, and self. Dr. Streff said, "By slowing children down, you reinforce them positively by giving them more time in which to develope their educational skills and to establish emotional adjustments to the world which surrounds him."

A teacher's workshop was conducted for eighteen days and was designated to communicate to the teachers in what way they can encourage a child to explore the world in which he is to perform. One of the major concerns of the workshop was to allow teachers to express their views on "How does learning take place," as opposed to, "How does teaching take place?" Programs were established based upon the answer to the questions discussed. Activities were chosen which emphasized the multisensory aspects and encouraged physical involvement of the child. Incorporated into this program was the chance for a child to solve problems of a varied nature while retaining game-like qualities. The importance of personal contact, the use of creativity and the emphasis upon success was stressed. "If you change teachers, they will be changed for all the children they touch thereafter," said Dr. Streff.

A third consideration was how to evaluate a child's success in a classroom. How do you measure student involvement and self-confidence? How do you evaluate perceptual skills development? Every teacher was reminded that each child is an individual and that each child has something to contribute. Therefore, evaluations should be made by weighing all aspects of the child's production in the classroom.

The fourth question under discussion was how to make the most of the facilities provided. One suggestion made was that areas for different activities be set aside within the room. Multi-leveled areas could also be constructed to give the child a chance to experiment with his perceptual skills.

"Children always give the right answer."

Parental Involvement was established by training the parents with various remedial methods. A parent worked with two to three children three days a week for one half hour. Parental involvement in tutoring may contribute to a better understanding of children.

To achieve success with children, Dr. Streff suggested that the educators and parents must allow a child to change and develop a trust in his own motor-sensory perceptions. Dr. Streff concluded with, "Children can be effective problem solvers by changing our approach from teacher self-centered to student self-centered. Children always give the right answer. It may not be the answers to your questions. What you do in that school system will affect a child's success in all future endeavors."

WHAT PSYCHOLOGISTS CAN CONTRIBUTE

TO EDUCATORS AND OPTOMETRISTS

Louise Bates Ames, Speaker*
Annett Kuck, Reporter**

Vivacious! Fascinating! Controversial! These words of introduction by Dr. Petrie proved to be apt descriptors of Dr. Louise Bates Ames. Sweeping onto the podium and delivering a rapid-fire speech with hardly a pause to catch her breath, she also personified the "perpetual windmill" of the introduction. Co-author of at least eighteen books, Dr. Ames is co-director of the Gesell Institute of Child Development. She is also in charge of research at the Institute.

Pointing out that any profession is lost without other professions and that a professional team approach exemplifies an effectively working philosophy, Dr. Ames went on to explain the developmental philosophy of the Gesell Institute. The basic premise is that "behavior is a function of structure." Therefore, before an individual's behavior can be evaluated, it is necessary to understand the structure and developmental stages of the organism. She believes that in this respect Piaget and Gesell are saying much the same thing. Gesell psychologists *are* interested in environmental factors, but only in relation to a firm understanding of biological factors.

The major thrust of the presentation centered around stopping school failure and was based upon major points from her recent book, *Stop School Failure* (1972). First, according to the speaker, possibly fifty per cent of school failures could be prevented or remedied by developmental placement. Developmental placement means starting or placing a child in school on the basis of behavioral age — not chronological or mental age. She recommends that all children be given a developmental behavior test, such as those used at the Gesell Institute, and a retest one year later to determine their behavioral age. She believes many children, especially boys, need an extra year or six months before entering first grade. If a school bases school entrance on chronological age, she recommends that

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the child be on the "old" side when he enters. She especially urges that the "fall baby" be protected from overplacement. "Give them time to grow. Some children need more time to grow."

"Behavior is a function of structure."

A second major point for stopping school failure was emphasized by the Gesell psychologist. If any child is experiencing difficulty in school, careful diagnosis is essential before trying to help. Psychological tests are not as sacred as some psychologists would like those outside the profession to believe. Many competent people, including optometrists, educators, and reading specialists, can use a number of tests to help diagnose the causes of a child's difficulty in school. The main test given at the Gesell Institute is the *Basic Behavior Test*, which can be administered by a competent examiner.

Careful diagnosis is essential before trying to help.

Another highly regarded diagnostic test is the *Bender Gestalt*. Results from it can give good clues to possible brain damage, maturity level, perceptual difficulties, or emotional disturbances. This test should not be used by the untrained, however. The *Rorschach Inkblot Test* is another diagnostic tool used at the Institute which should be administered only by trained psychologists.

Part of the diagnosis should include some measure of the child's

Dr. Louise Bates Ames of the Gesell Institute

intelligence, although this is no guarantee of readiness or success in school. The *Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children* (*WISC*) is used most routinely at the Institute. This can be administered only by a trained psychologist. However, the *Slosson Intelligence Test* was recommended as a test for giving a good clue to basic intellectual level. The *SIT* is not difficult to administer by a non-phychologist.

Finally, a basic understanding of behavioral changes is necessary for proper diagnosis. The Gesell Institute books, *The First Five Years* (1940), *The Child from Five to Ten* (1946), *and Youths: The Years from Ten to Sixteen* (1956), were recommended as guides to understanding children's developmental stages.

Careful diagnosis may indicate that the child is a victim of overplacement — that he was started

in school too soon and so has run into trouble. In a Gesell study it was determined that 67 per cent of the children diagnosed were immature and overplaced. "If such is the case," Dr. Ames urges, "let them repeat."

"Give them time to grow. Some children need more time to grow."

Parents worry that repeating will ruin a child forever. However, Dr. Ames believes that if the situation is explained and approached correctly the child will adjust to it. She proposes some such explanation: "Sometimes parents and teachers make mistakes. We find we made the mistake of starting you too soon."

Negative feelings about repeating are based upon old research studies Dr. Ames theorizes. A recent Gesell Institute study conducted on 65 repeaters was cited as evidence of the success of repeating. Parents' and teachers' responses on questionnaires indicated that all repeaters received higher grades, made a good adjustment to school, and showed an improvement in attitude and self concept. Although repeating is not a panacea, she feels that repeating and being successful will make up for the temporary trauma of repeating.

Careful diagnosis may indicate that the child is a victim of overplacement.

The dynamic Gesell psychologist went on to theorize on ways of stopping reading failure. First, schools should start and continue to place children on the basis of behavioral age. Secondly, teachers should *wait* for readiness. A child should be on the verge of reading before formal reading instruction is begun. She warned that teachers should not start children in reading too soon and then rely on remedial help to patch up the damage done when they run into trouble. Along with John Holt, Dr. Ames believes that schools start reading too soon. "Why not start reading in third grade?" she queried.

The speaker's third point in stopping reading failure was a reiteration of her emphasis on diagnosis. "When a child has reading difficulty, get a careful diagnosis before any remediation is done," she advises.

Finally, parents and teachers were warned not to be overly impressed by terms such as "dyslexia" and "learning disabilities". Attaching a label does not solve the problem. Too many feel that if they can get a label and a special class for it the problem is solved.

"Why not start reading in the third grade?"

In conclusion, Dr. Ames stressed that all individuals and all disciplines must work together to stop school failure.

Although some of the points made were controversial, they proved stimulating, thought-provoking, and conducive to discussion and debate. One can only speculate about their impact on the future of education.

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Perceptual Clairvoyance

Fay Biles, Speaker*
Walter Schobel, Reporter**

Perception of the past, present, and future was the topic of the discussion presented by the main speaker, Fay R. Biles, Vice-President for Public Affairs and Development at Kent State University. Dr. Biles said that perception is a "broad viewpoint". In her years at Kent State University, she has seen changes in the students' perceptions of university education. These new perceptions, she feels, are the result of the students' adaptations to the university environment and new images that go along with the changing times. The result of these changes is that the students of the late 60's and early 70's are taking a critical look at the education they are receiving and asking, "Is education really worth it?"

Dr. Biles feels that within the 1960's and early 1970's, we have gone through a period of change. The change, she says, has been from the "Age of Reason" to the "Age of Feeling." The "Age of Reason" involved looking at our world and conceptualizing, analyzing, and criticizing. During the 60's, the degree was important to the college student. As we became more affluent, the student began to have more time to study the values of the system he was to enter. The students upon examining the system felt that they were being taught more like robots than human beings. They felt that the system must become humanized and thusly the "Age of Feeling" sprang forth on our college campuses. Along with this movement, subcultures such as the "Jesus Cult" began. This movement from the "cognitive domain" to the "human domain" took on the characteristics of "honesty" and the "return to nature" which we hear and heard so much of during this period in time. Dr. Biles feels that the campus revolution peaked on May 4, 1970. She feels that much of the political movement has died. She used the example that at Kent the radicals are few in number these days. Dr. Biles feels that professors must become more involved with their students.

Many students supplement their education with the use of such media tools as television and films. Media should be utilized in the education of all the nations' students.

On a broader base, Dr. Biles related some ideas on how the nation perceives itself and those who function in it. She feels America has "lost confidence and nerve lately". The result has been a lack of confidence in our nations institutions which also includes the nations universities. Dr. Biles stated that "few of those who perceive the institution can articulate it and few of those who articulate it can perceive it." The point she is making is that members of our

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society are denying the announcement of our successes, as a nation, and exaggerating our country's failures. Some of the successes she pointed out are the wars on poverty and civil rights. In our country the biggest problem has been race. While the race problem is far from being solved, great strides in the nation's goal of a multiracial society have been made. Programs of the "Great Society" have been

Pull together not only as educators, but as a nation.

responsible for this. In explaining the exaggeration of failures, she used the issue of Watergate as an example. While many people feel this is the result of the system, she pointed out that Watergate is not a failure of the system but a "failure of men" who are in it. It was the system, envisioned by those who set up our government in 1776, that prevented more serious consequences of the affair to settle down on our nation. Dr. Biles points out that intellectual life shapes perceptions and the result has been the production of followers, critical of society. They are also increasing in numbers today. She feels that society needs to be critical of itself to stay healthy, but, also, too much of anything will destroy it.

What does this mean for us today and in the future. As we progress into the future, we will be becoming a society of "service" rather than one of the production of "goods". Dr. Biles feels the University must regain its lost prestige and become dominant in society once again. Those in the profession, as well as the nation, must pull together. To do this, we must open up our institutions to a general society. The profession must get the support of the running of our institution out of the legislature and back to the people. Show the people that the institution is good. It is the job of the people in education to wake up the general public to education and all of the benefits that it has to offer. Further work, Dr. Biles feels, is needed to bring back the "Age of the Cognitive Domain", yet keep those good points that the "Age of Feeling" has produced. Dr. Biles said this age of feeling has resulted in students being "mixed up" as to what their goals in the future, with relation to not only the university, but their roles in society as well, will be.

To sum it up, Dr. Biles sees that the future for all of us will be good if we regain faith and vision in our institutions, pull together, not only as educators but as a nation. By becoming more self aware of our heritage and future, it is this new "perception" that will send us forward into a new era.

The students felt that they were being taught more like robots than human beings.

Russell Stauffer, Speaker*
Margaret Stoligrosz, Reporter**

Dr. Russell G. Stauffer, head of the Reading Study Center of the University of Delaware, believes that the teaching of reading has three major areas. Reading can be taught perceptually, logically, and evaluatively. He demonstrated these methods both by using the audience and fourth grade children from Taft School, Lakewood, Ohio. Dr. Stauffer feels that all three areas are important for instruction by the aware teacher.

Teaching Perceptually

Dr. Stauffer stressed his point on teaching perceptually by presenting a series of overhead transparencies of optical illusions. One was the *Ames Test of Incongruencies* in which one looks into a slanted room through a peephole. Objects placed in the room appear to be of different heights depending on where they are placed in the room. Another illusion stunned the entire audience. At first, one could have taken it for one of the inkblot pictures in the Rorschach Test. As Stauffer gave hints, more and more of the audience began distinguishing its characteristics as being a picture of Christ. Stauf-

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**Graduate Assistant in Reading, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio.

fer used these illusions to emphasize how people tend to keep one set idea until incongruencies are pointed out to them.

This idea is especially important to the teacher. As Stauffer says, "You must find out how the world looks to the student." In reading, the person must form a gestalt of letters to form a word. He must learn to regroup symbols into words. If the reader does not form this gestalt, then the words become distorted and meaningless. The child who distorts words may find it very difficult to read.

Distorted Ideas

Along with distorting words one can also distort ideas. Stauffer states, "Your biases, your prejudices, your bigotries, your unaccepted opinions — do you allow them to sway your thinking without fruitfully accepting the evidence, weighing the evidence, and reaching a fair conclusion?" Without flexibility in judgment and an ability to regroup words and ideas, a reader may distort his view of a material.

Teaching Logically

The second area for teaching reading is to teach logically. Teaching logically is to teach children to "think" according to Stauffer. Teaching logically means to teach intellectually. Stauffer's example was the little boy who did not see a story as being logical when it told about a parade of ducks as being three. This boy apparently knew how to think logically.

Reason - Ratio - Balance

Stauffer believed it important to thinking to use a 3-step procedure: reason-ratio-balance. Thus, the reader balances his experiences against his knowledge in a reading situation. In other words, the reader balances what he knows against what the author says.

In reading, according to Stauffer, a person uses information to make judgments, not to recall. Stauffer believes that man is a predictive animal. He learns to read the world around him. His predictions are made from his previous knowledge. The predictions are a basis for the reader to make decisions or evaluations of what he has read.

"Reading is a cognitive process . . ."

Stauffer went on to give his definition of reading. He said, "Reading is a cognitive process of actively reconstructing internally organized concepts as a means of processing information represented by language." He showed a model of this learning in terms of a triangle with a movable base line. Stauffer listed experience as a method using examined and unexamined symbols, signs, pictures, pictographs, or language of society.

Stauffer used two sample words, "pinnate" and "bisextile" to illustrate his view of phonics. Phonics, according to Stauffer, is an auxiliary skill to compensation. His opinion is that as long as a word is in a speaking vocabulary, it has meaning when it is sounded out. However, if it is not in the speaking vocabulary, the word will have no meaning. Comprehension, again goes back to the experiences of the reader.

Directed Reading, Thinking Activity Approach

Stauffer finished his talk by using the audience in a demonstration of his "Directed Reading, Thinking Activity Approach." He captured the entire audience's interest in a first grade story called, "The Newspaper Helps." He stressed the discovery method in catching the interest of the reader.

Stauffer's speech was followed by a demonstration of his Directed Reading Thinking Activity Approach with a group of fourth grade children from Taft School, Lakewood, Ohio.

Making Children's Literature Work

Donald Bissett, Speaker*
Chris VanVeghten, Reporter**

Dr. Donald Bissett, professor of education at Wayne State University, works with children and children's books and thinks he has the best job in the world! He was able to share this feeling with those present at the O.C.I.R.A. convention in his address, "Making Children's Literature Work For You In The Reading Program". Dr. Bissett first gave an overview of current trends in children's literature and how it might pertain specifically to those interested in the teaching of reading. This whole address was punctuated with entertaining examples from the large sampling of books he brought along, while all adults present sat as children during a good story hour.

Young children are very visually oriented.

He illustrated in this way that publishers are tending now toward bright colors and more use of illustrations in books. This is extremely important to young children who are very visually oriented; attracting and interesting them in books. The illustrations used here led to a discussion of the increased trend toward the writing and retelling of folk stories which has been increasing over the years. This is important to those interested in reading and language development because this genre can present to children a variety of language patterns which no other can.

Realism is getting more and more real, and this is important for children so that they can find that real things do come from books. It poses a problem for those in the position of evaluating the books, however. It is hard for an adult to distinguish their standards from children's and determine what is real and important for them.

Connected with realism in literature is the current emphasis on the female image in books. Dr. Bissett feels that this emphasis is only now beginning to have its effect on literature for primary age children, but was able to show several new examples of girls in these books proving themselves to be quite aggresive, independent and inventive.

"Fantasy is another area of children's literature which is undergoing a transformation."

Fantasy is another area of children's literature which is under-

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**Graduate Assistant in Reading, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio

going a transformation. It is so hard to predict what children's reactions to fantasy will be, that it is important to judge those books from children's reactions, not adults. The current rage, Dr. Bissett mentioned, is a surrealistic sort of fantasy which most adults can't understand!

The role of minority groups, other than the female, is also changing. These characters have been becoming more and more prevalent for quite a while, but only now are they starting to become more relevant and real. The idealized image is now changing and we now have good guys, bad guys, good fairies and witches.

Informative books are affected by the new trends also. They are gaining more subtlety and more of an interesting story line, as opposed to being so blatantly informational. Number and alphabet books are also becoming much more practical for classroom use with bright colors and clearer print.

"The problem is to get teachers to convey their enthusiasm for books into practical ideas in the classroom."

Compared to ten years ago, the quality of children's books, Dr. Bissett feels, is most definitely on the rise. The problem is to get teachers to convey their enthusiasm for books into practical ideas in the classroom. This practicality is a strong point of interest for Dr. Bissett and was the other main focus of his talk.

Different kinds of books with different kinds of language models must be included in each teachers program, as this has proven to make a significant difference in each child's acquisition of language. Children need to be read aloud to, and this is an activity which needs to be definitely planned for.

Too often, Dr. Bissett feels, teachers are too occupied with the teaching of skills in reading. Reading has many other wide and varied possibilities. Children can be introduced through books to the plight of migrant workers, broken families, and different religious traditions. Reading is meaningful. If children really believe this, they will *work* at developing their skills. If they do not believe this, they will not.

Many books published are visual games.

There are certain books which belong right in the skills programs of the schools. These books, in Dr. Bissett's words, "cry out" to be used. Many books published are visual games, which may be preferable for teachers to using dittos for this activity. Picture books can also be used for this activity. Children can practice picking out details in the pictures using those with progressively simple to complex density of detail.

Many children not previously interested in books can be encouraged to retell simple books into their own language stories. In the experience of the speaker, many children have been attracted to books this way.

In summary, Dr. Bissett emphasized that it is important to keep interesting books on hand for children. Both adults and children should be involved in the evaluation of these books. If we give children a chance to participate in the evaluative process, it will help them to learn how satisfying and important a process reading is.

PROMOTING CHILD SUCCESS

A Discussion

Discussion Leaders

What have we learned?

What practical applications can we make?

With these two questions, Dr. Petrie set in motion the multidisciplinary discussion session dealing with the theme of promoting child success. The panel for this discussion included the two main speakers, Dr. Streff and Dr. Ames. Also included were representatives from the many small group discussions of each discipline held earlier.

Louise Ames and John Streff

"Bad habits" can be corrected by special devices.

Patricia Berman*

Beginning the session were the classroom teachers who were concerned with promoting child success in the area of how to determine a proper optometrist for referral. The teachers were also concerned with developmental tasks, as discussed by Dr. Ames, and the "bad habits" which can be corrected by devices such as a special pencil holder. The reply to these questions, made by the speakers, was that the key to judging an optometric examination was that one-half of the examination should be conducted at near point. In reply to the teachers' concern with the children's "bad habits" in holding a pencil, Dr. Ames said that it was not really a case of "bad habits", but immaturity and the child must be allowed to develop a mature grasp of a pencil without having it labeled as inappropriate behavior. The program must be geared to the children at their present level of development.

The next to speak were the representatives of the reading teachers and supervisors. Again the discussion ran to the idea of developmental tasks as presented by Dr.

*Graduate Assistant in Reading, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio

The child should not be pushed for the sake of accountability.

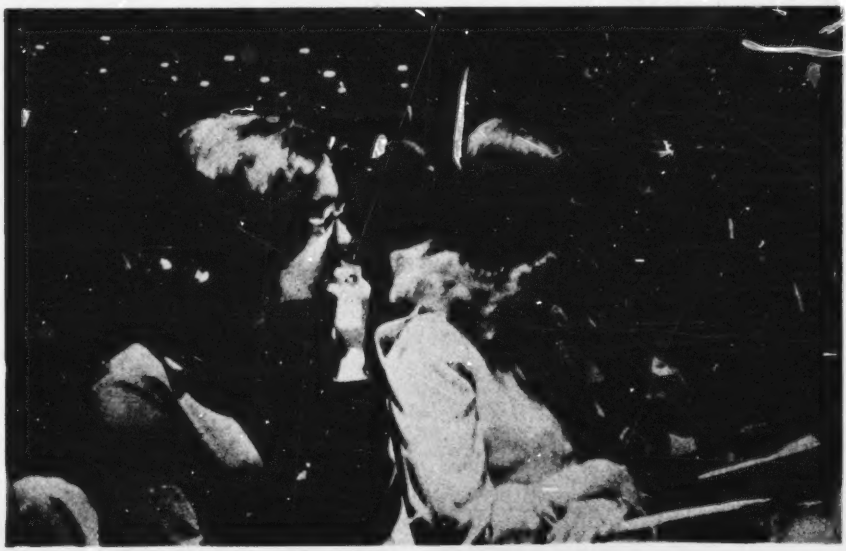
Ames. Also discussed were the ideas of the speakers on accountability and the role of the special teacher in promoting child success. It was the belief of Dr. Ames that the child should not be pushed for the sake of accountability. Children should be made comfortable in their learning by paying attention to their development. It was also the speakers' feelings that children should not be pulled out of their regular classroom for remediation but that the special teacher should work closely with the regular teacher in a developmental framework.

The next discussant was the representative of the university faculty discussion group. They felt that the colleges and universities were meeting the challenge of producing teachers who could teach diagnostically. Both speakers agreed that colleges and universities were trying, but they emphasized that the education students needed more time working with children and that more emphasis should be placed on the future teachers' knowledge of child development.

The representatives of the speech and hearing therapists, the optometrists and the school nurses, expressed basic agreement with the speakers and discussed the relevance of their message to their respective fields.

Use simple sentences instead of putting reports into your own disciplines.

The final message of the speakers was to the group as a whole. It was a call for simple sentences to be used instead of putting reports into our own disciplines, or particular "lingo". This would help in joining the forces together in working on promoting the success of children, making it a more united, multidisciplinary effort.



Twenty-s

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READING

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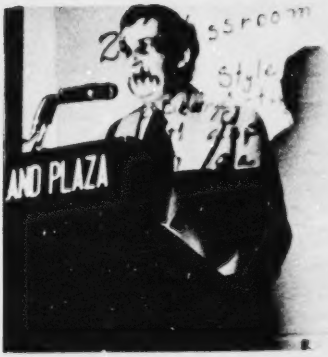

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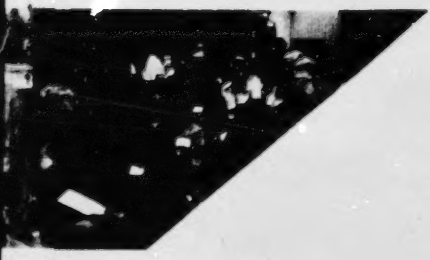

Urging Creative Writing for Children

Luvonne Pitts*

"Start pushing creative writing as a method of building your library."

Is there a shortage of fascinating reading material in your school? Start pushing creative writing as a method of building your library. Children have reams of material bottled up inside them. We need only to allow it to escape.

There are several cautions to note before embarking upon an intensive program. First and foremost is that if you are going to allow children to be "creative," there can be no restrictions placed on choice of topic, wording, approach or any other facet of the assignment. You must have the strength to accept the risk *and* accept the product. According to Mimi Brodsky Chenfeld, teachers should develop an "all-purpose OH!" to handle any and all situations which children precipitate through writing. (If you didn't have the opportunity to hear Mimi at the Fall OCIRA conference, try to schedule her in your area for a council activity; you won't be sorry).

Creative writing is a way to add to the loosening and reduce the uptight.

Ms. Chenfeld feels that creative writing is a way we can add to the loosening and reduce the uptight. We can't control the rest of the world but we can control what happens in our own room. We made use of Mimi's "Sense Charts" as a method of introducing a class

*Field Representative, OCIRA; Supervisor, Muskingum County Schools, Zanesville, Ohio

of third graders to a creative writing project and the results were fabulous!

If you feel the need to do a little research in preparation for creative activities there are some excellent publications to help you get started: Koch's *Wishes, Lies, and Dreams; Schools Are For Children*

The changes in their lives are big and dramatic and have happened fast.

by Hertzberg and Stone; *Flair,* one of the Spice Series books; *The Me Nobody Knows* by Joseph; and Hall's *Teaching Reading as a Language Experience.* Some of these titles may seem odd as references but to really get the feel of how most children operate deep-down and from day-to-day, you should read a book like *The Me Nobody Knows.*

There is a section in *Wishes, Lies, and Dreams* titled "I Used To /But Now" which gives an insight to some of the deep emotions children will express if given the opportunity. This book is dedicated to Koch's former junior high school English teacher who "encouraged me to be free and deep and extravagant in what I wrote so that I could find what was hidden in me that I had to say . . ." Koch suggests that children love to write about the difference between the way they are now and the way they used to be because the changes in their lives are big and dramatic and have happened fast. One example is:

"When I was a baby I looked
so pretty, but now they
just forget me."

Many teachers are establishing a "Creative Writing Corner" or station where materials needed for writing may be obtained and a child may have a quiet place to work. This seems to be a good idea in view of the fact that children may use the facilities when they have the urge to write rather than trying to be creative from 9 to 9:30 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday!

A few children will draw a complete blank when told to write about anything they choose. Use some techniques like Story Starters, Story Stoppers, Imaginary Situation Cards, Invented Circumstances Cards, etc., to get them off and running. You won't

. . . . all humans feel a need to contribute something of themselves to others.

have to provide this assistance for long. Once the children become aware that you are trusting and supportive of their efforts, they will begin to write on topics that are directly related to their everyday existence.

All humans feel a need to create and all humans (kids, too!) feel a need to contribute something of themselves to others. Writing for others with the specific challenge of providing reading materials for other children can be a highly motivating influence for your class.

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Developmental Reading: Beyond The Basal Reader

RIGHT TO READ AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Charles Campbell** and Barbara Rich*

The Helen J. Neeley Elementary School, located in the City of Brook Park and one of fifteen elementary schools in the Berea City School District, is a National Right to Read Expansion Site. Nearly 600 children are enrolled in this 21.2 teacher school.

Parental Involvement

Each Right to Read School conducted an extensive needs assessment in order to design a reading program which focused on the needs of the children it served. One important component of the Neeley Program relates to parental involvement. Therefore, parents of the Neeley school children are encouraged to become actively involved through a variety of carefully planned reading-related activities — both at school and at home.

A Reading Games Make-It Session

For example, a "Reading Games Make-It Session" in order to stimulate parents — mothers and fathers — to become involved in the Neeley Right to Read Effort. Parents, teachers, administrators and educational specialists worked together in making appropriate reading games for the Neeley students. Naturally, the students ex-

*Reading Coordinator, Helen J. Neeley Elementary School, Berea, Ohio
**Principal, Helen J. Neeley Elementary School, Berea, Ohio

pressed delight over the idea that, "My mother or father helped to make this game!" As a result, these Neeley students appear to place greater value on reading games which have been constructed locally.

The Reading Games Center

Games made at the "Make-It-Session" are filed and catalogued in the Reading Games Center, which is located in the Neeley Right to Read Status and Reporting Room. One unique feature is that parents can "check-out" reading games to take home in order to help their children reinforce reading skills. Reading games provide a fun way for parents to help their children practice skills for reading improvement.

Parent Volunteers

Another important parental involvement activity at Neeley relates to the use of parent volunteers. After interested parents are identified and contacted, intensive orientation meetings are scheduled. These meetings provide background on the many Right to Read Activities which are included at Neeley, and they provide suggestions relating to how the parent volunteers can help. Some parents construct reading materials while others serve as volunteer tutors. Those who tutor children work closely with the on-site reading coordinator and the teacher so that their duties are understood completely. These duties relate to working directly with specific children on tasks identified and supervised by the teacher and the coordinator. They may assist with particular reading exercises, listen to children read, play reading games and provide adult encouragement. The on-site reading coordinator keeps careful records of these volunteer activities.

Developing A Home Climate

In addition, parents can develop a home climate which provides an important motivational force for improving reading. In order to provide parents with suggestions to develop a home climate for reading improvemert, teachers at Neeley organized a booklet entitled, *Games to Play at Home*. This booklet for parents lists practical, easy-to-use suggestions for improving reading climate and reinforcing reading skills. "Cross the Brook", "Christmas Tree", "Turkey and Ax Game", and "Basketball Game" represent a few of these exciting reading games.

Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading

Parents also are encouraged to establish a Family U.S.S.R. Project. This Family Project (*U*ninterrupted *S*ustained *S*ilent *R*eading) is a carryover from the school project where everyone — adults and students — reads for enjoyment for ten or fifteen minutes. Providing a "reading model" where all read for enjoyment and satisfaction demonstrates that reading is important.

Parental Involvement Represents Success

Thus, parental involvement activities have represented a most important factor in the success of the Neeley Right to Read Expansion Site. Teachers, parents and students working together can do much to improve reading development for all children with a cost of time, energy, and support for each other.

Editor's Note: The full title of Margaret Griffin's article published in the 1973 Fall issue of the **Ohio Reading Teacher,** (Volume VIII, No. 1), was inadvertently left out. The title should have read: **Reading Diagnosis: The Student and The Curriculum.**

sugar... SPICE... and puppy dog tails

Jerry J. Mallett*

It is time to stop forcing boys and girls into stereotyped roles.

Mrs. Smith sat at her desk in front of the classroom. "Today, boys and girls, I want you to think of something very special. I want you to think about what you are going to be when you grow-up." Almost immediately hands went flying and waving in all directions. "Yes, Dave?" asked Mrs. Smith... "I want to be a doctor." . . . "Oh, how fine! Yes, Betty?" . . . "I want to be a ballerina when I grow up." . . . "Wouldn't that be exciting! Yes, Mike?" . . . "I want to be a truck driver." . . . "Oh, then you could travel all over the country." . . . "Yes, Alice" . . . "I want to be a plumber." . . . "A plumber!" exclaimed Mrs. Smith with eyes wide and an open mouth. Audible giggles and groans could be heard from around the room. "Oh Alice," laughed the teacher, "Don't be silly!"

It was rather obvious from Alice's questioning and hurt look that she didn't think that being a plumber was at all silly. But she certainly learned a lesson that day, as did Dave, Betty and all the other children in the class. There are certain occupations unacceptable for girls or for boys to work toward. While this example is a rather obvious display of society's dual standards between the sexes, activities such as this one help to build attitudes regarding the expectations of one's sex role. Just as Alice was given a negative reinforcement for her goal, the other children were given positive reinforcements because they had chosen an *acceptable* path to their future. Acceptable by society's standards. BUT... society's standards are changing. The distinction between the sex roles is beginning to blur and become less polarized.

This new attitude is reflected not only in the adult world, but its impact is also being felt in the children's sphere. The books available to children may serve as a sort of barometer to this cultural change.

*Associate Professor, Findlay College, Findlay, Ohio

To be sure, we still see books published propagandizing the more traditional sex roles. Certainly, *I'm Glad I'm A Boy, I'm Glad I'm A Girl* by Whitney Darrow, Jr. is a modern classic of the stereotyping of sex roles. This picture book, having been published in 1972, will hopefully be one of the last of a breed! As a young child leafs through the book, he or she is indoctrinated as to the acceptable roles opened to the different sexes.

The distinction between the sex roles is beginning to blur.

Whitney writes: "Boys become doctors. Girls become nurses. Boys become pilots. Girls become stewardesses." But possibly the most condescending line is "Boys invent things. Girls use the things boys invent."

However, a wealth of new "liberated" books are being published for children. Eve Merriam's book, *Boys and Girls, Girls and Boys*, stresses the similarities between the sexes rather than polarizing the differences. She accomplishes this by comparing individual boys and girls. Take for instance, Lee B. and Lee G. who are in the same class at school. "Lee B. brings his turtle to school for show and tell. Lee G. brings her hamster. Lee B. has a new bat. Lee G. has a new catcher's mitt so they can play at lunchtime. Both Lees like to draw pictures and read books and hammer and fix things. When Lee B. grows up, he wants to be a chef in a grand hotel by the sea. Lee G. may become a pilot. She'll fly over the ocean to visit him."

Norma Klein attacks the stereotyped sex roles in a similar manner. "That's not the way it goes," Adam said. He was already putting on the white doctor costume that was in the costume box. "Girls are always nurses and boys are always doctors." But Marina wanted to be the doctor and the airline pilot, not the stewardess. And lots of other things girls were not supposed to be . . . according to Adam Sobel." In *Girls Can Be Anything*, Adam soon learns differently. Indeed, he discovers that women are already contributing members in practically all occupations.

Charlotte Zolotow writes of a boy in her book *William's Doll*, who loves his train set and his basketball net hung on the garage, but more than anything, William wants a doll. "He wants to hug it and cradle it in his arms." His brother tells him not to be a creep. The boy next door calls him a sissy. And his father is frankly worried. But William's grandmother comes one day and explains to all of us that the boy's need of a doll is quite natural. After all, without a doll, how could he "practice being a father."

"A wealth of new 'liberated' books are being published for children."

In a society that prides itself on its concern for the freedom of the individual and accepting each person's worth . . . it is clearly time to stop forcing boys and girls into stereotyped roles. But as the new trend of children's books indicate, allow each child to develop his/her own personal role for living.

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LEVELED STUDY GUIDES

Gaye Laurell Wolfe*

Part I of this article will introduce study guides, explain the three levels of comprehension, and provide an example of a three-level study guide.

Part II, which will appear in the summer issue, will explain how to construct and use study guides for any subject area classroom.

Students vary in ability to handle the textbooks used in subject areas. In any class, some students are able to use the text with little or no difficulty but other students find the one assigned text much too difficult.

Especially in classes using one textbook, study guides can:

- provide for different levels of ability and achievement
- provide for differences in learning rate
- develop independence in learning
- involve the students actively in the learning process
- involve the passive student who never contributes to discussions
- help students understand the material better
- help meet the needs of the slower student

Before learning to construct study guides, it is important to understand the three levels of comprehension.

THREE LEVELS OF COMPREHENSION

Level I-Literal: identification and recall of factual detail; knowing what the author said.

Level II-Interpretive: inferring significant relationships among the details; knowing what the author meant.

Level III-Applied: formulating general statements or developing abilities which extend beyond the subject matter; intellectual or physical use of the understandings.

In the same class, students can react to the same material at different levels of comprehension using study guides. In this way the teacher is able to deal with the various levels of ability and achievement of the students in the class.

On the following page is an example of a three level study guide.

*Member, Lake County Council, Mentor, Ohio

A THREE LEVEL STUDY GUIDE*

My One Father

Dennis F., age 13

I am thirteen years old and my sisters, one of them is six and one of them is seven. And I do not know how old my father is because it was when I was a little baby, about three months old, when my father left. So I will tell you how old my mother is, around thirty-six. And I wish that my father would come back where he started at the beginning. I have been so lonesome with no one to play with or go out with.

From the book **The Me Nobody Knows**, edited by Stephen M. Joseph.

A. **Literal level: What Dennis said:**

Read the above passage and place a check next to each statement that represents something Dennis, (the author), wrote.

..... 1. He has two sisters.
..... 2. His mother and father are 36 years old.
..... 3. He has a baby brother.
..... 4. He has no one to go out with.
..... 5. He wishes he were three months old again.

B. **Interpretive level: What Dennis meant:**

Place a check next to each statement that represents what Dennis means.

..... 1. He had one father in his life.
..... 2. He doesn't like his one mother.
..... 3. He plays with his sisters most of the time.
..... 4. He feels alone most of the time.
..... 5. He thinks a father is important to a family.

C. **Applied level: How to use the ideas:**

Place a check next to each statement that you can support based on your own experiences and Dennis' writing.

..... 1. Teenagers need a father and a mother.
..... 2. There is no one to associate with if you have only one parent.
..... 3. A boy needs brothers instead of sisters.
..... 4. We often think about something we desire, but don't have.
..... 5. Teenagers can't express their feelings in writing.

*Fourteenth Annual Reading Conference, (June 1972), Syracuse University, Syracuse, N.Y.

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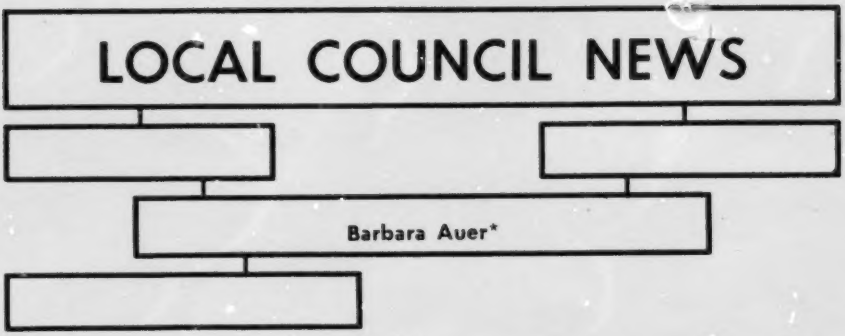
LOCAL COUNCIL NEWS



TWO COUNCILS WITH SOMETHING EXTRA

Euclid Council President Irene Ross has set the theme for this year as "Reading as a Source of Power to the Pupil." The Council's Program Chairman has taken up a challenge to obtain nationally recognized educators for their meetings. Here is what they have had so far!

On November 29th, 250 educators heard Dr. Arthur Heilman, Director of the Reading Center at Penn State, speaking on "The Magic of Language." On January 24th, the council was addressed by Dr. Laurel M. Pennock, Deputy Executive Secretary, National Association of Elementary School Principals. His topic was "Just Teach Them to Read." March 28th was the date of still another exceptional meeting featuring Dr. Sidney B. Simon, Professor of Humanistic Education, University of Massachusetts, presenting the topic "Values Clarification Techniques and Their Implications to Reading."

The CUMC Council offered an all day meeting on the Multi-disciplinary Study of Children's Learning. On January 12th, such questions as: How do children see? What are the new findings in visual research? What are the signs of minimal deafness? Why do reversals occur? were only a few of the questions covered by the guest speakers. The three speakers for the event were: Dr. James C. Bieber, O.D. Clinical Instructor at the Perceptual Development Clinic; Dr. Timothy Rink, Audiologist; Dr. Earl Sherrard, M.D., Neurosurgeon, Children's Hospital. All three are professors at OSU.

FROM THE COLD OF WINTER TO THE WARMTH OF LOCAL IRA MEETINGS

Defiance College — Dr. Herbert Sandberg, President of OCIRA, "Children and Books"

Tri County — Mrs. Ann Osborne, Special Reading Teacher, "Individualizing a Reading Program for Slower Students"

Ruby Fishburn — Mrs. Robert Willoughby, "Children's Literature"

Crawford County — Jim Grandy, an inspirational talk on professional growth for reading teachers — "A Dash of Blue Paint"

also

Ruby Fishburn, Field Representative for OCIRA, "Teaching Word Recognition Skills"

Akron — Dr. Barbara Stoodt, Assistant Professor of Education at the University of Akron, "Reading in the

*Remedial Reading Teacher, Coshocton, Ohio

Content Area"

also

Mrs. Ruth Gooding, President Elect, OCIRA, "Reading at the Secondary Level"

Martha Weber — Mary Amos, BGSU Library Faculty, "Storytelling"

City of Oregon — Mrs. Freda Carlson, Supervisor, Lucas County Schools, "Role Playing in the Classroom" (a demonstraion with a group of sixth graders)

Greater Columbus — Mini Workshop, Sr. Barbara Jinks, "The Perceptual Handicapped Child" Charles Thompson, "Informal Testing in the Classroom"

Bette Musgrave, "What to Look for in the Elementary School"

Meredith Johnson, "Reading in the High School"

Kettering — Mrs. Vera Dahm, Associate Member of the International Transactional Analysis Association, Teachers' Image and How It Affects Reading in the Classroom"

Cuyahoga Summit — Kitty Rose, Teacher in Euclid and CWRU, "Creative Drama"

Sandusky Bay — Dr. Ruth Mueller, OCIRA Representative, "Achievement-Motivation"

Mary Austin — Learning Disabilities Panel

Lake Geauga — Gayle Shawand and Ken Buckley of Mentor Public Schools, "The Open Class oom" The Geauga Council is also publishing a newsletter called **Readout**.

★ ★ ★★★★ ★ ★

PEOPLE WITH SOMETHING EXTRA

CUMC granted life memberships to Doris Ramsey and Gladys Norris for outstanding leadership in the local council and in area reading supervision and to Dave Masters for his contributions to reading publicity.

Ohio Hills — Ethel Blackburn, C. Wick Gahm and Vicki Gahm are 1974 Martha Holden Jennings Scholars.

★ ★ ★★★★ ★ ★

ORT REPORTERS WITH SOMETHING EXTRA

Patricia S. Jackson, JoAnn Swonger, Jean Baker, Vicki Gahm, Helyn Maidment, Guy Phillips, Alice Kreinbrink, Mary Ann Pickworth, Grace Stewart, Jane Shula, Sr. M. Iona Taylor, Roma Frey, Shirley Vitek, Bertie Brandes, Edith M. Schaloske, and Gordon Anderson.

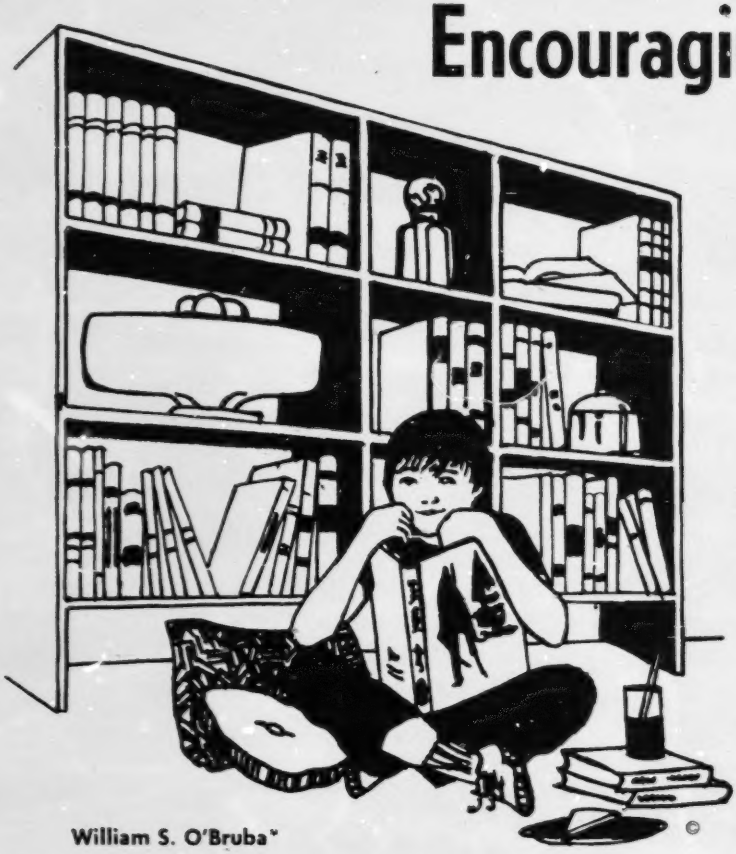
When others fail him, the wise man looks

To the sure companionship of books.

—Andrew Lang

OLD FRIENDS

Encouraging



William S. O'Bruba*

Teachers of young children should seek many activities to encourage their children to read independently. One of the main goals of the primary reading program is to develop independent reading in the children. In order to accomplish this independent reading habit among the children, the teacher should be aware of some of the ideas that can be used to motivate independent reading. Included here are several suggestions for using independent reading with young children. The suggestions are not classified with variations.

- A library corner, complete with a bulletin board display is essential to good book promtion. Themes for the bulletin board could be related to specific topics of interest to the children or popular authors, or types of books.

- Oral reading by the teacher can often motivate re-reading of the books by the children. Oral reading of a book up to a crucial point is an excellent way to stimulate further reading by the children.

*Assistant Professor, Bloomsburg State College, Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania

Independent Reading with Young Children

• Oral reading by the children can include such activities as reading the most interesting or most exciting parts of a story. An especially vivid description of a character or setting also makes good material for reading aloud.

• The children can bring favorite poems to class to be read individually or by groups (after adequate preparation) to stimulate further reading of poetry by the children.

• Informal conferences with children about their books do much to stimulate continued reading. In fact, the teacher should circulate among the children during their independent reading time to encourage, guide, or just listen to a child talk about his book.

• New books in the classroom library deserve some fanfare. A few well chosen words about each book will help to keep it circulating. Some children might enjoy helping the teacher by assuming responsibility for presenting brief previews of new books to their classmates.

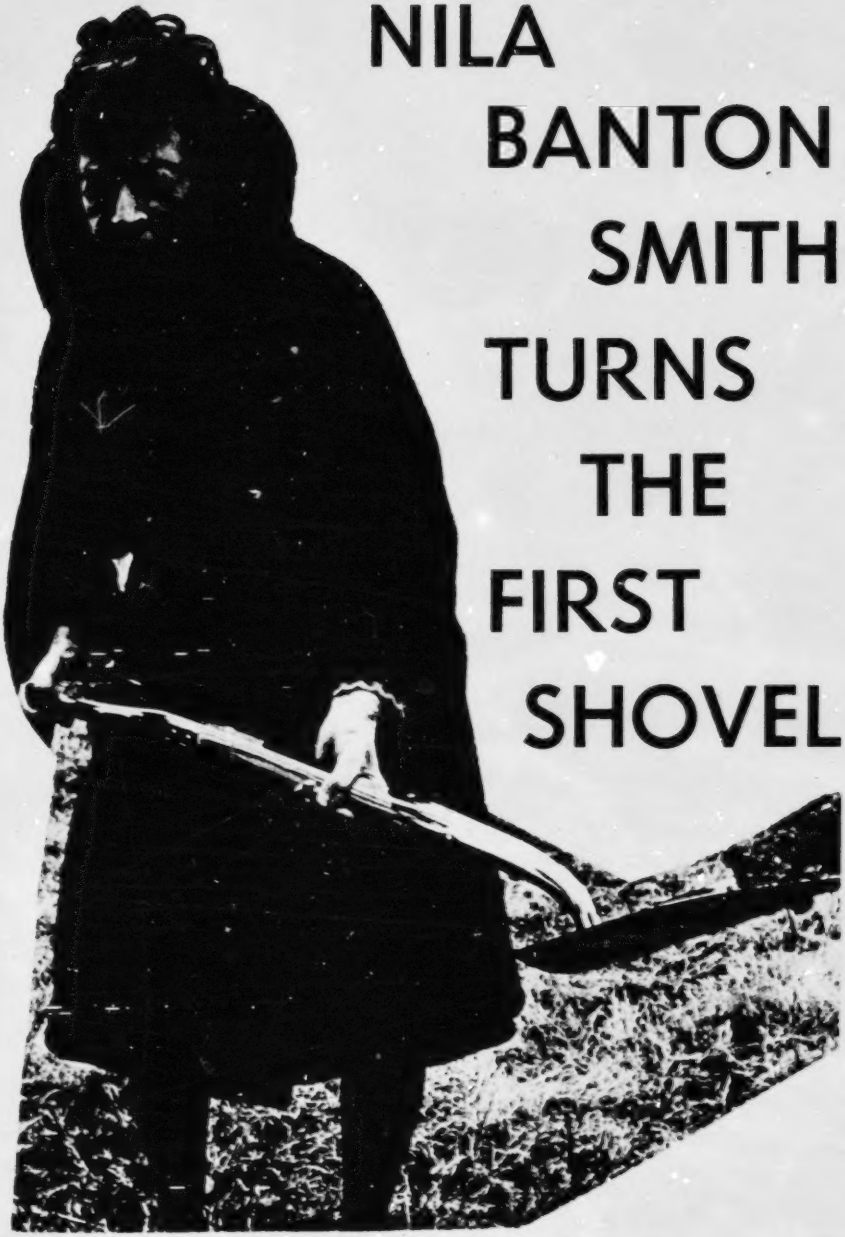
• A visit to a public library, with plenty of time to browse among the shelves, can awaken many children to the lively world of books. If some prior arrangements can be made, the librarian might present a story time during the visit.

• Puppets are as much fun to make as they are to operate. A large packing box or a table turned on its side can serve as a stage. Kindergartners enjoy making small drawings of characters introduced in picture books or story telling sessions and pasting them on sticks or pencils to use as puppets. More elaborate puppets can be made by sticking a ball of clay on the end of a finger and using a handkerchief around the rest of the hand to form the puppet's body.

• A first grade buddy system can be an effective way to encourage those children taking their first faltering steps toward the selection of library books. The teacher can pair the children and let each pair find a book especially written for independent reading.

• Children's magazines offer a wealth of varied material which can serve as a springboard for lively class discussions and motivate further reading by individual children. Children can bring in their favorite magazines to discuss and evaluate their contents.

Beginning to read independently is a big step for most young children. The teacher can encourage the children by providing exciting experiences to motivate the desire of each child to read and read each day.



NILA BANTON SMITH TURNS THE FIRST SHOVEL

"Put stone steps anywhere and time sets in. Builders make stone steps climb."
—John Ciardi

CLIMB STEPS STONE MAKING

Nila Banton Smith*

Recently, when I heard about an earthquake in the vicinity of Philadelphia, it occurred to me that even Mother Nature was trying to participate in our IRA groundbreaking activities. Please forgive me for being facetious.

I am deeply honored to have a part in dedicating the new Headquarters Building of the International Reading Association. This is indeed, an occasion of very great significance.

When I first saw this land, it was in 1966, seven years ago. Dr. Staiger brought me out here with Hugh Gallagher, a real estate man, who filled us in with informative details. The Board was considering the lot at that time as a possible site for our new Headquarters Building. As I listened and looked,

*Past president of the International Reading Association

I was greatly impressed with several things. I will mention just a few of them. The setting was attractive. There was easy accessability both to and from New York, Washington, and Philadelphia. We were in a university town, and financially, it seemed that there was every possibility for this land to increase in value rather rapidly.

After considering these mundane matters seriously, I stood for a moment in silence, perhaps on this very spot, and gave myself over to dreaming. In my mind, I pictured a structure arising on this lot, a structure that would be worthy of this great organization which I was sure would be growing so rapidly in the future; a structure which I hoped would represent the organization itself in solidarity and strength and service; a structure built on the firm, hard foundation of Delaware soil, even as our organization has been built on the firm foundation of the hard and persistent efforts of our membership.

I envisioned a structure rising here which would embody the very heart of our organization in the many activities that would take place within its walls; a heart that would beat on throughout the years ahead, ever pulsating stronger, ever sending forth larger and stronger streams of assistance and guidance and inspiration to our members in all parts of the world.

This I envisioned as I stood here, perhaps on this very spot, seven years ago, and now my dream is about to come true. Architect and engineer are soon to begin work on this structure which I am sure will fulfill all the functions that I envisioned while standing here back in 1966. This is indeed, a time for great rejoicing: great rejoicing on the part of the officers of this organization; on the part of the Board of Directors; on the part of the Headquarters officers and their loyal, faithful, hardworking staff; and on the part of our splendid membership, for whom all the others I have mentioned exist.

And in the midst of this rejoicing, we must pause to give thanks to those generous people who have contributed financially to this building. To them we owe fervent and profound thanks.

And now, with mixed emotions of honor and gratitude and happiness, I shall lift the first soil in dedicating the splendid new Headquarters Building of the International Reading Association. May it serve our organization long and well!

Editor's Note: The above remarks were made on March 5, 1973, at the ground-breaking ceremony for the new IRA Headquarters Building. The new building is now completed and will be occupied after the New Orleans Convention. Visitors are welcome anytime.

Total donations to date exceed $700,000 of which Ohio Local IRA Councils contributed $6,879.32. Gifts are still being accepted. You may send your gifts to Ms. Margaret V. Lloyd, Ohio Building Fund Chairman, 44 West Main Street, Westerville, Ohio 43081.

A feature of the new building will be the Nila Banton Smith Leadership Room. It was established to honor Dr. Smith for her strong, dedicated leadership in IRA and the field of reading. Dr. Smith is a former president of IRA and provided the money for the purchase of 2.1 acres of land on which the new building stands.